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HISTORICAL ACCOUNT
—OF—
HANCOCK COUNTY
AND THE
Sea Board of Mississippi.

AN ADDRESS

Delivered by Hon. J. F. H. Claiborne,
OF BAY ST. LOUIS.

At the request of the Citizens, and in compliance with a Resolution
of Congress, and the recommendation of the President of the
United States, and the Governor of the State of
Mississippi.

July 4th, 1876.

Hopkins' Printing Office,

26 Camp Street, corner Common, New Orleans, La.

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HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF Hancock County and the Sea Board of Mississippi.

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For years and years, beyond the memory of man, this sea board and the bluffs and hammocks of its beautiful rivers and bayous, were occupied by Indians, members of the great Choctaw family, who were chiefly concentrated at the Old Towns and Muggalushee Fields, in the present counties of Jasper and Neshoba.

The tradition of the Choctaws is, that the Naniwyha-hill, (near the source of Pearl River, and geographical centre of the State, in the county of Winston) gave birth to two children; that they were suckled by a bear, and afterwards supplied with meat by a panther and a wolf. The boy grew up to be a mighty hunter and warrior; the girl became the mother of the tribe.

The Choctaws were in the habit of visiting this coast, from the same inducements that bring visitors to it now. Some of them remained permanently, giving the musical names to our streams and localities that many of them are now known by. This place, where we are now assembled, was called *A-chouc-poulou*, or Bad-Grass-place, in reference to a very troublesome burr, which still annoys us. This shore was, for these children of nature, a paradise. The woods abounded with game—the waters with fish—no enemies could approach them by ambuscade—their aged and infirm felt, as we now feel, the elixir of the air—and by these murmuring waves, and in those fragrant groves, the young warriors wooed and won the dark-eyed maidens of the tribe! It was savage life, such as Chateaubriand has painted it in the glowing pages of *Attala*—remote from war—a prolific forest—a tropical climate fanned by exhilarating breezes and perfumed by the pines—and this beautiful bay, offspring of two rivers, looming out into the depths of the misty sea, beyond which lay the “happy hunting grounds” of the blessed!

On a bleak day in January, some 175 years ago, a startling vision presented itself, as the fog rolled away, and the sun beams gilded the waters. It was the fleet of D'Iberville at anchor in Ship Island harbor, which he had safely entered without a pilot or a chart—an evidence of its capacities which should not be overlooked. He had been sent from France to explore the Mississippi River and colonize Louisiana. Placing his people on the island, and leaving his ships, he proceeded in his boats to search for the mouth of the river; ascended it to the outlet of Manchac, (since called Iberville); thence descended it to a river which he named Amite; through the lakes, which he named Maurepas and Pontchartrain to this place, which he styled Bay of St. Louis. He soon after transferred his colonists to the bay of Biloxi, and erected a fort on the northeast shore, manned with twelve pieces of cannon. In December of the same year, 1699, he placed a few families here with a sergeant and fifteen men, in a small fort, near where the Toulmè mansion (Judge Chandler's) now stands. And he then sailed from this place to select a site for a fort on the Mississippi. In the meantime large grants of land on that river, and along this coast, were made by the French Government, on the condition of colonization. The Bay of St. Louis was given to Madame de Mezieres, and the Bay of Pascagoula to Madame de Chaumont. The former lady does not seem to have improved her concession, but the latter, more enterprising, dispatched a ship, which arrived in January, 1721, with three hundred colonists. From these, and from the Acadians expelled by the English from Nova Scotia, and from a few Greek and Minorcan families imported into Florida by the English in 1767, most of the Creole population on this Coast is descended.

In 1701, Bienville, who had become Governor, was ordered to leave a small garrison at Biloxi and transfer his headquarters to Mobile.

In 1717, Louisiana had passed into the hands of a company of French speculators, at the head of which was the famous John Law. This company directed headquarters to be re-established at Biloxi, and a fort, storehouse and barracks, were erected on the western shore; and thenceforth the post was known as New Biloxi, or Fort St. Louis. The sagacious Bienville had recommended the present site of New Orleans as far preferable to Biloxi, and Hubert, a capitalist from St. Malo, recommended Fort Rosalie (Natchez), and sailed for France with that object in view, but died soon after his arrival. Thus, in 1720, New Biloxi was the capital of Louisiana.

The first negroes were brought in by a ship from the coast of Africa; and some two hundred Germans arrived. The first coinage was introduced. It was of copper, dated 1721, and specimens have often been found in this vicinity.

The first priests that appeared on this coast, were fathers Montegay and Davion, who had left Canada some years before, and had been instructing numerous savage tribes in the faith of Christ. Father Davion had erected a chapel at what is now known as Fort Adams, on the Mississippi, but which was then called La Roche à Davion.

In 1722, Law's company having fallen to pieces—no supplies came from France—little attention had been paid here to the cultivation of the soil, and great distress prevailed. The troops were distributed in small posts among the Indians to procure subsistence, and the traces of these posts may yet be seen on the bluffs of Pearl, Pascagoula and other streams.

In 1723, Bienville transferred his headquarters to the present site of New Orleans; and Biloxi and this coast, was known as the Third Military District, under the command of Loubois, a veteran officer, and a knight of St. Louis. The order to move from these pleasant shores to the swampy banks of the Mississippi, occasioned the same discontent we should experience were we ordered to transfer our residence there to-day. Many deserted, and a company of Swiss, in the French service, soldiers distinguished for fidelity, having embarked at Biloxi for New Orleans, as soon as they got into deep water, put the vessel about and made for Charleston, South Carolina. We must condemn the mutiny, but the incident shows that the men of that day properly appreciated the advantages of this delightful region.

The prosperity of this section and of all Louisiana, was seriously affected by the disastrous wars of Louis XIV.

In 1758-9, Quebec and Montreal, and all Canada, had been surrendered to the English. On the 10th of March, 1763, by the treaty of Paris, France surrendered to England all her possessions in North America east of the Mississippi river. At the same time, Spain ceded to the English her colonies of East and West Florida. West Florida extended from Apalachicola river to the Mississippi, and was bounded on the north by the 31st degree of latitude; south, by the Gulf of Mexico, and an imaginary line drawn, mid-channel, through lakes Pontchartrain and Maurepas, and the rivers Amite and Iberville, (Manchac) to the Mississippi. Pensacola became the provincial seat of government, with a garrison and military government at Mobile.

About the same time the island of New Orleans, and all the French territory west of the Mississippi, were ceded to Spain. She soon became involved in a new war with England, and in 1799, Don Bernard de Galvez, the ablest of the Spanish Governors of Louisiana, attacked and carried the British forts at Mobile, Baton Rouge and Pensacola; and West Florida, including this Sea-coast, was surrendered to the Spaniards.

Thus, in the course of a few years, our predecessors on these peaceful shores, had been subject to three flags—the silver lilies of France—the gorgeous banner of Spain—and the blood-red cross of England—each of them representatives of the faith of Christ—of chivalry, dominion and civilization!

The Spaniards held Louisiana until the year 1800, when it was ceded to Napoleon Bonaparte, First Consul of the French Republic, with all its original metes and bounds, which carried its eastern boundary to the Perdido river.

Napoleon, with half of Europe in arms against him, and threatened by the maritime superiority of England, found himself unable to take possession of the province; and to prevent its seizure by the English, he sold it to the United States April 30th, 1803. On the 30th November following, the American Commissioners, Gov. Claiborne, of the Mississippi territory, and Gen. Wilkinson, of the U. S. Army, took possession and hoisted the United States flag in the *Place d'Armes*.

Under this cession of Louisiana, the United States claimed the country to the Perdido, including this Sea-coast and Mobile. But the Spaniards insisted that Pearl river was the eastern boundary of Louisiana. They occupied Mobile and Pensacola with a strong military force. The United States was not in a condition for war, and a complicated diplomatic controversy was carried on between the two governments.

In the meantime, some eight or ten thousand Americans had settled in West Florida, between Pearl river and the Mississippi, and the 31st degree of latitude and the Lake shore, under grants from the British and Spanish authorities. Becoming dissatisfied with the frequent transitions, and the conflicting tenures of land; and to increase the value of their possessions—they determined to set up for themselves. In 1810 they seized the Spanish fort at Baton Rouge, organized a convention, adopted a flag, declared their independence, sent out military parties to enforce allegiance, and very coolly proposed to be admitted to the Union as a sovereign State, or to be annexed to the Mississippi or Orleans territories. In

answer to this proposition, President Madison, on the 29th October, 1810, issued a proclamation, declaring that West Florida was within the limits of Louisiana, when ceded by France to Spain, and by Spain to France, and by France to the United States, and directing Gov. Claiborne, of Orleans Territory, to take civil and military possession of the same. And twenty thousand dollars were placed to the credit of the Governor to defray the expenses of the movement.

In pursuance of these orders, Governor Claiborne repaired to Bayou Sara and Baton Rouge, supported by several companies of volunteers, chiefly from Mississippi, and, without opposition, hoisted the American standard. The American settlers had accomplished their main object by placing the district under the jurisdiction of the United States.

It is refreshing and may be instructive, in these days of extravagance and official delinquency, to add, that of the sum placed at the disposal of the Governor, he only drew for \$4,202.96.

Gov. Claiborne, by proclamation, declared West Florida an integral portion of Louisiana. By an act of the Territorial legislature the country was organized as the county of Feliciana, and divided into seven parishes. Our Coast was divided into the parishes of Biloxi and Pascagoula, the eastern boundary being Bayou Batrie, but was subsequently extended to the Rio Peno or Dog river, near Mobile.

During the time when the Florida or St. Francisville Convention was exercising jurisdiction—from the seizure of the Spanish Fort at Baton Rouge to the assumption of authority by Governor Claiborne on the part of the United States—this coast, and especially the Pascagoula settlement, was in a state of anarchy. Bands of fillibusters or jay-hawkers roved through the country, as they did during the late unhappy war, pillaging the peaceable inhabitants. One Sterling Dupree, styling himself Major, and one Peter Nicola, claiming to be a captain in the service of the Convention, seem to have been the leaders of the free-booters. They carried the flag of the Convention and compelled the inhabitants to swear allegiance to it. They obliged masters of coasting vessels to take out pass-ports and pay extravagantly therefor, and they made seizures and exacted contributions and free quarters wherever they went. On one occasion the inhabitants of Pascagoula attempted to rescue a heavy seizure of negroes, horses and merchandise, but were driven back by the superior forces of the Convention, with the loss of Samuel Davis killed, and Allen Goodin and others, wounded.

Sailing master Farragut, commanding the sloop Alligator, in the service of the United States, sent the following statement to Governor Claiborne:

"On the 2d December, 1801, I arrived in the bay of Pascagoula. On going ashore next day, a number of men gathered around, and said Majors Hargroves and Dupree wished to see me. I said I would call the following morning. Accordingly, on the 4th, I found them at the house of the late John B. Nicolet. On my arrival they ran up the flag of the Convention. Next day they pressed John B. Boudro's schooner, and two others owned by Anthony Krebs and Augustine, a mulatto. These they brought before Mr. Nicolet's house, and loaded with negroes, dry goods, liquors, provisions, furniture, etc.—the personal property of deceased. They even removed the locks from the doors. Next day they proceeded up the river, the destination being the residence of their leader, Dupree, two miles south of the 31st degree, the line of demarcation. Peter Nicola, with the commission of captain, was appointed commandant at Pascagoula, with orders to compel the inhabitants as far as Pearl River, to swear allegiance to the Convention. Returning westward, I fell in with said Nicola, James Havins and two other men, names unknown, at the Pass of Christian. They were ordering the people to Pascagoula to take the oath. There were no Spanish authorities on the coast. They had retired to Mobile.

GEORGE FARRAGUT."

On receiving this information Gov. Claiborne dispatched Dr. Wm. Flood, a prominent citizen of New Orleans, as commissioner to the sea coast, with special instructions. And on the 25th of January, 1811, he made a long and interesting report, from which the following passages are extracted:

"In compliance with your instructions I left New Orleans on the 5th, on the felucca Alligator, and proceeded to the residence of Simeon Favre, on the east bank of Pearl River, and delivered to him your commission as Justice of the Peace, for the parish of Biloxi, with a copy of the Constitution of the United States, the Civil Code and the acts of the Territorial Legislature. I next landed at Bay St. Louis and the Pass of Christian, displaying the United States flag at each place at 2 P. M. At the Pass I presented to Philip Saucier your commission as Justice for Biloxi parish, with copy of the laws, etc. Then proceeded to bay of Biloxi, where I handed the commission of Justice to Jaque Ladnier. Landed near the mouth of Pascagoula River on the 13th, and hoisted the United States colors. Here I overtook Fortesque coming, who had preceded me to distribute the proclamation. I fell in with several men who had left Dupree a few days before. They informed me that Col. Kemper, commanding the Convention forces, had disbanded, telling his men that in getting under the jurisdiction of the United States their object had been accomplished. I filled up a commission for Mr. Coming as Justice for Pascagoula, and dispatched him up the river to endeavor to recover from Dupree the property he had carried off. And, at the special request of the citizens, by whom he is greatly esteemed, I prevailed on sailing master, George Farragut, to accept a commission as Justice. The other commission I handed to Benjamin Goodin, who lives twenty miles up the river. There is but one house at Bayou Batrie, but I caused a flag to be hoisted there.

The population of Biloxi parish may be estimated at 420. Pascagoula at 350, chiefly French and natives of the country—the most primitive, simple and contented people I have ever seen. They seem to desire only the mere necessities of life, and to be without ambition, passion or vice. They appear greatly pleased to be under the protection of the United States."

The first magistrates appointed by Gov. Claiborne, were excellent and influential men. Philip Saucier was from an ancient family in France—a man of mark in his day—with the high sense of honor of the old cavalier, and noted for his hospitality and kindness. Mr. Ladnier, (or, as the name was then written, L'Adner), was not educated, but was a man of strong mind and inflexible

firmness and integrity. Judge Favre was a man of education, fortune and high standing. He had originally lived in Mobile and on the Tombigbee river, but as far back as 1777, he was residing on Pearl river. Bartram, the celebrated naturalist, in his travels through Florida and Louisiana, states that, in that year, being at Mobile, on his way to the Mississippi, Mr. Favre offered him a passage on his boat as far as his residence on Pearl river, where he was entertained with much hospitality.

In 1812, the Indians from the extreme northwest to the Gulf, were manifesting a hostile feeling to the whites. The celebrated Tecumseh, and his brother, the prophet, were endeavoring to organize a general confederacy of the tribes. They were then in the Creek Nation, and were employing all their influence to exasperate the Choctaws, whose territory enveloped our settlements, and whose warriors were sufficiently numerous to have butchered the whole country in sixty days. Under these circumstances, Gov. Claiborne addressed the following letter to Judge Favre :

NEW ORLEANS, June 4th, 1812.

Sir:—"Having received information that the Choctaws of the lower towns are committing depredations in the settlements on Pearl, Leaf and Chicka-awha rivers, and are disclosing a hostile disposition towards the United States, I have addressed to them a "Talk," which I herewith commit to your care. I request you to proceed without delay to the Nation, and after assembling the Chiefs and Head men, you will deliver and explain my address, adding such observations and urging such means as your judgment and experience may suggest. During your stay you will make inquiries on the following points: 1st. Whether the Creeks and Choctaws have been furnished with military supplies? 2d. The number of warriors in the Choctaw Nation, and what portion of them are supposed to be under Spanish or British influence? 3rd. The name of the towns where the Spanish or British have the most partisans, and the names of the Chiefs and Mingoes of said towns. 4th. Whether Tecumseh or the Prophet have been in the nation or sent their talks.

I confide greatly in your tact and experience."

This patriotic gentleman undertook, and ably performed this delicate mission. No man living, commanded to the same extent, the confidence of that powerful tribe. He checked the intrigues of the hostile agents, and stayed the tomahawk, then uplifted to strike.

The first arrest ever made in this county, then the parish of Biloxi, was made by Judge Favre. On the 10th January, 1811, he arrested one Wm. Bonford, suspected of having stolen two negroes and three horses. There being no jail the prisoner was sent to New Orleans, and he was subsequently delivered on the requisition of Gov. Holmes of Mississippi, to Thomas Torrance, to be tried in the county of Amite, the negroes having been stolen from Thomas Batchelor and Agrippa Gayden of that county.

Judge Ladner, from some unintentional misconstruction of his authority, got into the hands of Mr. Ellery, a prominent and

sharp lawyer of New Orleans, who usually passed his summers here, on the property now owned by Madame O'Brien. He applied in person for advice to Gov. Claiborne, who gave him the following letter to the Attorney General.

NEW ORLEANS, June 6th, 1811.

"The bearer, an honest and well meaning justice of the parish of Biloxi, is harrassed for an act, which, although perhaps, not strictly legal, appears nevertheless, to have been very just. Hear his story and advise him for the best. If justices are to be proceeded against for every unintentional and petty irregularity, I shall very soon receive the resignations of two-thirds of them. Mr. Ladnier informs me that Mr. Ellery demands of him fifty dollars, and promises to discontinue his complaint. This is a heavy assessment on a poor man for an honest act. But, if nothing else can be done, it may be well to pay Mr. Ellery, at my expense. I often see instances of these poor people being oppressed under color of law, and always regret when I have it not in my power to intervene."

Mr. Ellery, got his fifty dollars, and died not long after, and was buried in the old grave yard on the front.

About that time, 1812, the Mississippi Territory was represented in Congress by the Hon. George Poindexter, a man of great ability, who was then taking measures to have Mississippi admitted into the Union as a State.

Among his papers I find the following letter from Gov. Claiborne, from which I quote :

"Success attend your efforts to bring in Mississippi, but I cannot approve your wish to attach the whole of West Florida. Had you proposed that Orleans Territory should extend eastward to Pearl river, and up to the 31st degree; and the district from Pearl river to the Perdido, to be attached to Mississippi Territory, I should have made no opposition. But your demand for the whole is rather extravagant, and would be greatly injurious to the interests of Louisiana. I, myself, would prefer the Perdido for *our* eastern boundary, and there are strong equities in the claim. But we will compromise and take as far as Pearl river, and leave to you the country on the Pascagoula and Tombigbee, and the custody of one of the great avenues of western commerce, the Mobile river."

Mr Poindexter's views did not prevail. There was at that time great jealousy of territorial domination, and a disposition to circumscribe instead of extending boundaries. The State of Georgia, which had once claimed nearly the whole country known as Mississippi Territory, and organized it into a county called Bourbon, was particularly vehement in her opposition to Mr. Poindexter's plan, and even voted against our admission into the Union.

An act of Congress, approved April 14th, 1812, attached all West Florida, lying between the eastern branch of Pearl river, the 31st degree of latitude, and the Mississippi river, to Louisiana; and happily for us, this Sea-coast became part and parcel of the Mississippi Territory; was constituted 14th December, 1812, into the county of Hancock, and we assisted by our delegate, to make the first constitution preliminary to the admission of Mississippi as a State.

War having been declared by the United States against Great Britain, our volunteers had been principally engaged in severe con-

flicts with the Creek Indians, led by Gen. Claiborne of Natchez, and Gen. Nixon, of this county. Two regiments of United States troops, under Gen. Ripley, that had long been stationed here, (near the present mansion of our public-spirited fellow citizen, Alfred Ulman, Esq.), and had recruited into its ranks a number of our residents, had left for Canada, and had participated in the bloodiest battles.

On the 13th December, 1814, a desperate conflict took place off our shore between the American gunboats and the launches of the British fleet, having 1,200 seamen and marines and 45 pieces of cannon. The enemy captured the sloop Alligator, and cut off the schooner Sea-horse, which had been sent here to remove the public stores; but her gallant captain seeing that his vessel could not be saved—blew her up, and the stores with her.

A regiment of militia, under Colonel ———, from the interior, had been stationed here several days, to oppose the landing of the enemy. They had two pieces of cannon in position. When the British Flotilla approached to cut off the Sea-horse, the militia became nervous, and began to break ranks. Most of our citizens were on the bluff, and an invalid lady, from Natchez, exclaimed: "My God, Colonel, fire one gun for the honor of the country!"

The gallant colonel probably did not hear these words, for he was rapidly retreating, followed by the bulk of his men, and their first halt was at the Big-spring beyond Ho-bo-lo-chitto.

The lady called for a light. The late John B. Toulmè, then a youth, courteously handed his cigarette, and she discharged the cannon amidst the plaudits of our people.

A number of our young men, led by Mr. Toulmè, who knew the route through the marshes and bayous, went in pirogues with their rifles, and took part in the defense of New Orleans.

In those days this city was but a small village with no commerce, resorted to merely as a summer retreat. Pearlinton was the commercial point. It had been laid out on a metropolitan scale, covering, I believe, near a section of land, and it had been visited by the legislature, then sitting in Columbia, in 1821, who were sumptuously entertained, and went away with the most favorable impressions. Pearl River, from a point 20 miles below Columbia, to Monticello, was settled by wealthy planters, chiefly from South Carolina, who sent their cotton down in barges, shipped it to New Orleans on schooners, and brought back their supplies. This made Pearlinton lively and prosperous, and many distinguished families resided there.

In the whole county we had many cultivated and influential citizens—such men as Gen. Nixon, Col. Strong, Judge Louis Daniel, Col. Stewart, Gen. Peter Joor, Hon. Wm. Haile, Willis H. Arnold, Hon. Noel Jordan, Elijah Carver, Judge Morgan, Moses Cook, Isaac Graves, Pierre Saucier, John B. Toulmè, Judge J. C. Monet, John Martin, Major Samuel White, Leonard Kimball, Jacob Seal, Elijah and Wm. Lott, Daniel and John Burnet, Thomas Brown, Judge Wingate, Capt. John Bradford, Nicholas Mitchell, William and Joseph Wheat, Sidley Lenoir, Major Cleveland, Asa Russ, W. J. and Thomas Poitevent, Hon. Ben. Leonard, S. Thomas Randall, Dr. R. Eager, H. and R. Carre, Dr. R. Montgomery, J. W. Roberts, Judge Benjamin Sones, David Moye, George Holleman, Capt. Geo. Sheriff, D. S. Dewees, Felton Conly, John L. Armstrong, Francois Netto, A. H. Hersey, Judge C. B. Beverley, W. W. Frier-son, Jordan Smith, Peyton Lee, Geo. Moore, George Marse, Judge Winningham, Dr. C. A. Calhoun, E. F. Spence, Charles Litchfield, Wm. Boardman, B. Bourne, M. A. Thompson, A. W. Cameron, Jesse Coward, Jack Lizanna, Louis Spotorno, W. A. Whitfield, Alex. Bookter, Cader Colly, F. G. Casanova, J. B. Mitchell, S. J. Favre, T. A. Mitchell, Wm. and Hiram Smith, A. M. Slaydon, Capt. Stocker, J. J. Bordages, Conrad Hoffman, James A. Ulman, Green Wootan, Joseph Martin, Charles Frazer, Ozanne Favre, Stephen and John Moody, James Johnston, Robert Carr, Dr. Leonard, Luther Russ, Christian Koch, John Orr, Judge Stephen Meade, Redding Byrd, D. C. Stanley, Captain Cuevas, Dimitry Canna, Alexander Dimitry, Col. Hoyt, Alex. F. Cameron, representative men of whom any county may be proud.

If Pearlinton is no longer a cotton port, owing to the removal of planters from Pearl River to the central portion of the State, it has become one of the most important points for the sawing and shipping of lumber in the South. The mills at that place and its immediate vicinity employ many steam and sailing vessels, coastwise and to foreign ports, and over 600 hands in their various branches of business. The four mills, with four circular saws and three gangs, cut an average of 90,000 feet of lumber per day. Allowing 260 working days per year this would make 23,400,000 feet.

Poitevent & Favre sawed most of the lumber used in the construction of the N. O. & M. R. R. and its numerous bridges. Within the last few months they have shipped over 1,000,000 feet to northern, western and foreign ports, and they have supplied for the jetties 4000 round and square piles, 700,000 feet 3-inch

plank for sheet piling, 2,600,000 feet mattrass strips, 35,000 feet wall timber, 215,000 feet promiscuous lumber.

Add to this the turn-out from the mills at Log-town and Gainesville—all conducted on a large scale, by men of enterprise and capital; and the value of the brick and the tar, resin, tallow, beeswax, honey, wool, hides, peltry, staves, shingles, fruit, etc., shipped via Pearlington, and you may form some idea of the value of its commerce

The bar in this county has always been particularly strong: Gen. Pray, Hon. John Henderson, Richard Stockton, R. W. Webber, Thomas B. Reed, Hon. George Adams, Robert H. Buckner, Wm. Vannerson, Buckner H. Harris, Van-Tromp Crawford, W. A. Stone, of Pike, the "patriarch of the bar," D. W. Hurst, Gen. Daniel Adams, Gen. D. C. Glenn, Col. John H. Lanikin, E. Safford, Prof. H. F. Johnson, our lamented fellow-citizen, J. C. Monet, Col. J. B. Deason, S. H. Terrell, Charles A. Smith, W. A. Champlin, Roderic Seal, D. B. Seal, T. J. Humphries, W. G. Henderson, George Wood, Elliott Henderson, and others, now practicing here, make a brilliant array of legal learning, eloquence and moral worth.

Gen. Pray was from Maine, a State which gave us the illustrious Prentiss and the lamented Judge Sam'l A. Boyd, of Natchez. Like most young New Englanders preparing for a profession, Pray probably took a school while reading law. In a curious book called the "History of the County of Westchester, New York," vol. 1, p. 67, there is an account of a monument in the cemetery of the Dutch Reformed Church, at Peekskill, to the memory of Lieut. George McChain, with an inscription by P. R. R. Pray. It is written with much taste, and exhibits a severely classical and cultured mind. He came South, intending to settle in New Orleans, having a partiality for the civil law; but on account of his health, was induced, by the advice of Gen. Ripley, to establish himself at Pearlington.

Lands were held in West Florida by twenty-two different tenures, according to Sir Wm. Dunbar, who had resided in the district under three governments, and had himself surveyed the most important grants.

1. Lands granted by the British Government, and not abandoned by the grantees, or their representatives, and have been cultivated.

2. Lands granted by mandamus by British government, without condition of occupancy, and which never have been occupied by the grantees or their agents.

3. British patents from provincial Governors, with condition of certain improvements within three years, to be forfeited by non-performance, and which lands have not been occupied.

1. The last description of lands once occupied, but since abandoned.

5. Spanish grants by letters patent, or mandamus lands.
6. Spanish grants on lands formerly granted by British Governors, but never occupied by the British patentees, they not residing in the district.
7. The last description, with this difference, that the patentee, although he never occupied his land, was a resident in another part of the Colony, who, upon resisting this new grant of his land by petitions to the Spanish Governor, was overruled for non-occupancy and improvement, agreeably to the conditions of the British grants, and reiterated Spanish proclamations to the same effect.
8. Spanish grants upon lands which were vacant during the British government.
9. Lands purchased at public sale of the Spanish government, which lands had been declared forfeited by an insurrection in favor of the English, soon after the post of Natchez had been surrendered to the Spaniards. And this included British mandamus grants and patents by the British governors of West Florida.
10. Lands for which warrants of survey had been obtained prior to the ratification of the Spanish treaty, but which could not be patented until after that date.
11. Lands of the above description, but never patented, the proprietor holding the warrant of survey, and plot, and certificate of the district surveyor prior to the treaty.
12. Land for which warrants of survey were obtained before the treaty, but surveyed and patented after the treaty.
13. Lands for which warrants of survey were obtained prior to the treaty, but surveyed after the treaty, and not patented.
14. Warrant of survey and patent obtained since the treaty, but during the exercise of the Spanish jurisdiction, as agreed in an instrument between the American commissioners and the Spanish authorities.
15. Warrant of survey, with plot and certificate of the district surveyors obtained since the treaty, but no patent.
16. Warrant of survey obtained before the treaty, and improvement thereon, but the land not surveyed.
17. Warrant obtained since the treaty, with improvement and actual occupation, but no survey.
18. Warrant before the treaty, without improvement or survey.
19. Warrant since the treaty, without improvement or survey.
20. Improvement by houses, crop, stock and actual occupation, without authority by warrant or otherwise.
21. Improvement and crop without residing on the land, and without warrant.
22. Improvement and occupancy, and verbal permission of the Spanish Governor, with surveyor's certificate.

Here then are twenty-two conflicting classifications covering the lands of West Florida and the Mississippi Territory, and each one big enough to bear a hundred law-suits. No wonder the lawyers came to this country in crowds, and the very ablest of the profession.

The Hon. John Henderson—afterwards U. S. Senator—associated himself with Gen. Pray. Most of you remember him—his courtly demeanor—his severe logic—his inexhaustible argumentative faculty—his great and generous efforts and sacrifices for the liberation of Cuba.

Thomas B. Reed came to Natchez, from Kentucky, in early life. He was a man of imposing, but haughty exterior, of commanding manners, but not pliant or popular. His superior talents provoked envy, and the number of his enemies kept pace with his professional progress. He rose to the head of the bar; had no rival as an orator; and in spite of ill-health and powerful oppo-

nents, he obtained a seat in the Senate of the U. S. He soon distinguished himself there, but died in the prime of life. When Attorney General, he occasionally attended our courts.

Richard Stockton resided in Natchez—was from New Jersey—son of one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence—graduated at the head of his class at Princeton, began a brilliant career in Mississippi—was attorney general I believe—quarreled with a New Orleans gentleman at Stovalls Springs, in Marion county, and in the duel that followed, was shot through the heart.

Harry Cage, of an influential Tennessee family, settled in Wilkinson county, made a fortunate marriage, and by the influence of his wife's connections, became circuit judge. He was afterwards elected to Congress as the personal and political friend of President Jackson, but went off, like so many others, on the bank question, and lost his popularity. He and the famous Franklin E. Plummer were canvassing the pine-woods counties together, but on opposite tickets. Both were trained electioneers. They stopped one night with an aged couple, who had lots of children and grandchildren living around. Just before going to bed, Cage went to the woodpile under the hill, cut a lot of wood, and brought it in for the old lady to make her fire with next day. He was warmly thanked, and fancied he had made a ten-strike. Next morning at daylight, he missed Plummer and the old lady, and on looking around he found her milking the cow, and Plummer holding the calf back by its tail!

When they stopped for dinner next day, there was a house full of little children. Cage kissed them all round, but Plummer took the baby from its mother's arms, tenderly laid it across his lap, turned up its little slip, and *began to hunt for red-bugs!* The mother was perfectly carried away; and when she saw her husband coming from the field, she ran to meet him and tell him what a kind-hearted man they had in the house.

Cage lost his temper, and, when they mounted, said to Plummer: "Here we separate—you are too aggravating—and if we travel one day more together, you will tempt me to shoot you."

R. W. Webber was a Virginian; settled in Franklin county; was eccentric and somewhat dissipated, but had a mind capable of rapid concentration and the nicest discrimination; clear as a sun-beam and cutting as the scimitar of Saladin. He too was cut off in the prime of life.

Judge Adams was a Virginian, immigrating from Kentucky, where he had been eminent at the bar. He became in Mississippi,

successively, Attorney General, U. S. District Attorney, and U. S. Judge for the District. When he resided here, he was a mighty Nimrod, and his exploits in the woods and on the water, are well remembered. He was the father of those gallant soldiers, Gens. Daniel and Wirt Adams, and father-in-law of that distinguished lawyer, Gen. John D. Freeman, of Jackson, formerly Attorney General.

Robert H. Buckner, was a Kentuckian; settled in Monticello, afterwards at Clinton; a man of peculiar manners, but of vigorous mind and extensive reading. Became Chancellor of the State, a position for which few men were better qualified, but died prematurely.

Wm. Vannerson, a Virginian, long domiciled in Natchez, afterwards for many years in Monticello, and died there recently at an advanced age. He was the humorist of the bar—the life of the circuit—but withal well-read in his profession, very acute, a thorough judge of human nature, very apt to throw an adversary off his guard with his jokes and his air of carelessness, but as quick as lightning to seize upon a weak point of his opponent. A man of noble heart.

Crawford was a Virginian, nephew of the celebrated Wm. H. Crawford of Georgia, and very much like him in his mental organization. He settled in Amite; was elected Circuit Judge, and died in the prime of life.

Col. Lambkin was also a Virginian; resided in Pike, a man of impressive manners and vigorous intellect, a countenance beaming with the benevolence that warmed his heart. He, too, died when life had many attractions, and much to hope for.

Col. B. H. Harris—known to all our old citizens as “Buck” Harris—is not dead, I believe and hope; he long since went to Texas, and is far enough to excuse me for violating my rule—not to comment on the living. He is a Georgian, of a family long eminent in professional and military annals in that State. A colony of them came early to Mississippi, bringing with them the family traits and talents, and becoming prominent and influential wherever they pitched their tents. Col. Harris was a man of marked characteristics—impetuous but generous, a sharp debater, a skillful tactician, and anywhere and at all times a hard man to head. No man ever left Mississippi with more friends and more good wishes.

Of D. C. Glenn, to *this* audience, it is almost superfluous to speak. He was one of us. He, like so many of our lawyers, was a Virginian, with the marked attributes of that manly and noble

race. His graceful manners, his winning courtesy—the almost womanly kindness of his nature, his handsome person, his silvery eloquence, his voice so musical, yet so grand in its highest notes and soft as an angel's whisper in its lowest intonations, his store of classical and legal learning, the high chivalry of his character—all these we all know, and fondly remember.

Nor can we, on this occasion, forget the venerable member of the bar, whom we have recently lost—the Judge J. C. Monet. Born in France, and brought up on the seas, he landed here some fifty years ago, with no knowledge even of our language. He turned his attention to the law—a profession which he soon mastered. He took a prominent and useful part in all our public concerns; was often a member and very influential member of the legislature, and framed most of our local statutes; he was the confidential adviser of most of us, and the universal reference on all disputed questions of settlements and boundaries. Had Providence prolonged his useful life, this imperfect historical address would have been much more worthy of the occasion.

If ever bar has been distinguished, we have been equally fortunate in our judges. Hampton, Turner, Childs, Ellis, Cage, Sterling, Black, Willis, Harris, McNair, Hancock, Lechman, Chandler and McMillan, have all administered justice in this county, ably and impartially, and with no taint of dishonor attaching to their names; men of marked character and of high and noble attributes. Hampton resided on his plantation in Adams county; a man of fortune; an early immigrant from South Carolina, a sound lawyer, of irreproachable character. Edward Turner was a Virginian; came to Mississippi in 1801; resided chiefly in Natchez; was Register of the land office, clerk to the Legislature, Representative, Criminal Judge, Circuit Judge, Chancellor, Supreme Judge—in every position equal to its duties, untiring, conscientious, enjoying to the last hour of his useful life the confidence and esteem of the whole community. He was a large planter, and dispensed a genial and liberal hospitality with a courtesy rarely equalled. Joshua Childs was from one of the New England States, but had been an early adventurer and filibuster, in Texas. He was a drawling, tedious speaker, but a profound lawyer; an inveterate joker; full of anecdote; a confirmed, but very lively old bachelor, with many warm friends. He resided chiefly in Claiborne county. Powhattan Ellis was from Richmond, tinctured with the blood of Pocahontas—the most courtly and elegant, and finest looking man at the bar. Not at all brilliant, but solid, sensible, stately and

imposing. A silent man, who always made others talk and was himself a patient listener. Politic and prudent : mild and amiable ; slow and indolent. No enemies. He became Circuit Judge, U. S. District Judge, Senator in Congress, and Minister to Mexico. Sterling was a Northern man, who settled in Winchester at an early day, and connected himself by marriage with a wealthy and influential family. He was an indifferent speaker, but well-read in his profession, and very sociable and popular. John Black was generally supposed to be of northern origin, but claimed to be a Virginian. He settled at an early period, in the old town of Monroe, Terry county, when Winchester and Monroe were controlling positions in the politics of the State. He was only an average speaker, but a shrewed lawyer. A fine looking man, a good talker, a pleasant companion, with many warm friends. He was elected to the Senate of the United States as a Jackson man ; went over on the Bank question ; was very much petted at Washington by Mr. Clay, Watkins Leigh, Willie P. Mangum and others ; lost his position in Mississippi, and became a planter in Louisiana, where he prematurely died. Willie was a North Carolinian, raised chiefly in Claiborne county, a man of violent temper, stern, unflinching, but of a high sense of honor, sensitive and generous. A plain but strong lawyer. He sickened here when holding his last court, and died at the house of Col. Leonard Kimball. He had for a week previous a presentiment of death, and predicted the hour when he would expire. McNair, was, I believe, a native of Covington county, of a Scotch family from North Carolina—a thrifty and upright and intelligent race, of which he was a fit representative. A fair speaker, of correct convictions that always impressed the jury. Intellectual, laborious, conscientious, just—one of the purest men I ever knew.

Fellow-citizens: I have now given you a rapid outline of our history, and recalled some of our prominent pioneers. This is an appropriate hour for such reminiscences. At this very moment, delegates from every quarter of the Union, and representatives from all the nations of the earth, are assembled in Philadelphia, the birth-place of our INDEPENDENCE, to recall the struggles and perils, privations and sacrifices of our fathers for liberty and free government. Our countrymen have come together, to renounce forever the feuds of the past, and to proclaim eternal brotherhood!

On these shores, as you have seen, the soldiers of three nations have displayed the standards of their kings.

For ourselves we want but one, and will have no other!

And here, in the presence of ALMIGHTY GOD, with the spirits of our departed friends as witnesses, let us swear eternal fidelity to our Union and its flag!

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